

WATTY AND MEG;

OR, THE

WIFE REFORMED.

A TRUE TALE.



We dream in Courtship, but in Wedlock wake.

1074.

*Before I married Meg I'll tak' my aith,
Her tongue was never louder than her breath;
But now it's turn'd soe souple and sae bauld
That Job himsell cou'd never thole the scauld.*



GLASGOW:

PRINTED FOR AND SOLD BY

BRAD & BATH

WATTY AND MEG.

I.
KEEN the frosty winds war blawin',
Deep the sna' had wreath'd the ploughs,
Watty, wearyt a' day *sawin'**,
Daunert down to Mungo Blue's.

II.
Dryfter Jock was fitting cracky,
Wi' Pate Tamson o' the Hill,
"Come awa'," quo' Johnny, "Watty!
"Haith we'fe ha'e anither gill."

III.
Watty, glad to see Jock Jabos,
And sae mony nei'bours roun',
Kicket frae his shoon the sna' ba's,
Syne ayont the fire sat down.

IV.
Owre a boord, wi' bannocks heaped,
Cheese, an' stoups, an' glasses flood;
Some war roarin', ithers sleepet,
Ithers quietly chewt their cude.

V.
Jock was sellin' Pate some tallow,
A' the rest a racket hel'
A' but Watty, wha, poor fallow,
Sat and smoket by himsel'.

VI.
Mungo fill'd him up a toothfu',
Drank his health and Meg's in ane;
Watty, puffin' out a mouthfu',
Pledg'd him wi' a dreary grane.

* *Sawing Timber.*

VII.

- “ What’s the matter, Watty, wi’ you ?
 “ Trowth your chafts are fa’ing in !
 “ Something’s wrang—I’m vext to see you—
 “ Gudefake ! but ye’re desp’rate thin !”

VIII.

- “ Aye,” quo’ Watty, “ things are alter’d,
 “ But it’s past redemption now,
 “ O ! I wish I had been halter’d
 “ When I marry’d Maggy Howe !

IX.

- “ I’ve been poor, and vext, and raggy,
 “ Try’d wi’ troubles no that sma’;
 “ Them I bore—but marrying Maggy
 “ Laid the cape-stane o’ them a’.

X.

- “ Night and day she’s ever yelpin’,
 “ Wi’ the weans she ne’er can gree ;
 “ Whan she’s tir’d wi’ perfect skelpin’,
 “ Then she flees like fire on me.

XI.

- “ See ye, Mungo ! when she’ll clash on
 “ Wi’ her everlasting clack,
 “ Whiles I’ve had my neive, in passion,
 “ Liftet up to break her back !”

XII.

- “ O ! for gudefake, keep frae cuffs !
 Mungo shook his head and said,
 “ Weel I ken what fort o’ life it’s ;
 “ Ken ye, Watty, how I did ?

XIII.

- “ After Bess and I war kippl’d,
 “ Soon she grew like ony bear,
 “ Brak’ my shins, and, when I tippl’d,
 “ Harl’d out my very hair !

XIV.

- “ For a wee I quietly knuckl’d,
 “ But whan naething would prevail,

‘ Up my claes and cash I buckl’d,
 ‘ *Bess! for ever fare ye weel.*

XV.

‘ Then her din grew less and less ay,
 ‘ Haith I gart her change her tune :
 ‘ Now a better wife than Bessy
 ‘ Never stept in leather shoon.

XVI.

‘ Try this, Watty.—Whan ye see her
 ‘ Ragin’ like a roarin’ flood,
 ‘ Swear *that moment* that ye’ll lea’ her ;
 ‘ That’s the way to keep her gude.’

XVII.

Laughing, fangs, and lasses’ skirls,
 Echo’d now out thro’ the roof:
 DONE! quo’ Pate, and syne his arles
 Nail’d the Dryfter’s wauket loof.

XVIII.

I’ the thrang o’ stories telling,
 Shaking han’s, and joking queer,
 Swith! a chap comes on the hallan,
 “ Mungo! is our Watty here?”

XIX.

Maggy’s weel kent tongue and hurry,
 Dartet thro’ him like a knife,
 Up the door flew—like a fury,
 In came Watty’s scawlin’ wife.

XX.

“ Naffy, gude-for-naething being !
 “ O ye snuffy drucken fow !
 “ Bringin’ wife an’ weans to ruin,
 “ Drinkin’ here wi’ sic a crew !

XXI.

“ Devil nor your legs war broken !
 “ Sic a life nae flesh endures—
 “ Toilin’ like a slave, to floken
 “ You, ye dyvour, and your ’hores !

XXII.

" Rise ! ye drucken beast o' Bethel !

" Drink's your night and day's desire :

" Rise, this precious hour ! or faith I'll

" Fling your whisky i' the fire !"

XXIII.

Watty heard her tongue unhallowt,

Pay'd his groat wi' little din,

Left the house, while Maggy fallowt,

Flyting a' the road behin'.

XXIV.

Fowk frae every door cam' lampin',

Maggy curst them ane and a',

Clappet wi' her han's, and stampin',

Lost her bauchels i' the sna'.

XXV.

Hame, at length, she turn'd the gavel,

Wi' a face as white's a clout,

Ragin' like a very devil,

Kickin' stools and chairs about.

XXVI.

" Ye'll fit wi' your limmers round ye !

" Hang you, Sir ! I'll be your death !

" Little hauds my han's, confound you !

" But I cleave you to the teeth."

XXVII.

Watty, wha midst this pration

Ey'd her whiles, but durstna' speak,

Sat like patient Resignation

Trembling by the ingle cheek.

XXVIII.

Sad his wee drap brose he sippet,

Maggy's tongue gaed like a bell,

Quietly to his bed he slippet,

Sighin' af'en to himsel'.

XXIX.

" Nane are free frae *some* vexation,

" Ilk ane has his ills to dree ;

" But thro' a' the hale creation
 " Is a mortal vext like me !"

XXX.

A' night lang he rowt and gauntet,
 Sleep or rest he cou'dna tak' ;
 Maggy, aft wi' horror hauntet,
 Mumlin', startet at his back.

XXXI.

Soon as e'er the morning peepet,
 Up raise Watty, waefu' chiel,
 Kifs'd his weanies while they sleepet,
 Wakent Meg, and fought fareweel.

XXXII.

" Fareweel, Meg !—And, O ! may Heav'n
 " Keep you ay within his care :
 " Watty's heart ye've lang been grievin',
 " Now he'll never fash you mair.

XXXIII.

" Happy could I been beside you,
 " Happy baith at morn and e'en :
 " A' the ills did e'er betide you,
 " Watty ay turn'd out your frien'.

XXXIV.

" But ye ever like to see me
 " Vext and fighin' late and air.—
 " Fareweel, Meg ! I've sworn to lea' thee,
 " So thou'll never see me mair."

XXXV.

Meg, a' sabbin', fae to lose him,
 Sic a change had never wist,
 Held his han' close to her bosom,
 While her heart was like to brust.

XXXVI.

" O, my Watty ! will ye lea' me,
 " Frien'less, helpless, to despair !
 " O ! for this ae time forgi'e me ;
 " Never will I vex you mair,"

XXXVII.

- “ Aye ! ye’ve aft said *that*, and broken
 “ A’ your vows ten times a week.
 “ No, no, Meg ! See !—there’s a token
 “ Glitt’ring on my bonnet cheek.

XXXVIII.

- “ Owre the seas I march this morning,
 “ Liffet, testet, sworn an’ a’,
 “ Forc’d by your confounded girning ;
 “ Fareweel, Meg ! for I’m awa’.”

XXXIX.

Then poor Maggy’s tears and clamour
 Gusht afresh, and louder grew,
 While the weans, wi’ mournfu’ yaumer,
 Round their sabbin’ mother flew.

XL.

- “ Thro’ the yirth I’ll wauner wi’ you—
 “ Stay, O Watty ! stay at hame.
 “ Here, upo’ my knees, I’ll gi’e you
 “ Ony vow ye like to name.

XLI.

- “ See your poor young lammies pleadin’ ;
 “ Will ye gang an’ break our heart !
 “ No a *house* to put our head in !
 “ No a *friend* to take our part.”

XLII.

Ilka word came like a bullet ;
 Watty’s heart begoud to shake ;
 On a kist he laid his wallet,
 Dightet baith his een and spake.

XLIII.

- “ If ance mair I cou’d by writing
 “ Lea’ the fogers and stay still,
 “ Wad you swear to drap your flyting ?”
 “ Yes, O Watty ! yes, I will.”

XLIV.

- “ Then,” quo’ Watty, “ mind be honest :
 “ Ay to keep your temper strive ;

“ Gin ye break this dreadfu’ promise,
 “ Never mair expect to thrive.

XLV.

“ Marget Howe ! this hour ye solemn
 “ Swear by every thing that’s gude.
 “ Ne’er again your spouse to scaw!’ him,
 “ While life warms your heart and blood :

XLVI.

“ That ye’ll ne’er in Mungo’s seek me,—
 “ Ne’er put *drucken* to my name—
 “ Never out at e’ning seek me—
 “ Never gloom whan I come hame :

XLVII.

“ That ye’ll ne’er, like Bessy Miller,
 “ Kick my shins, or rug my hair—
 “ Lastly, *I’m to keep the filler*.
 “ ‘This upo’ your faul ye swear ?

XLVIII.

“ O—h!” quo Meg,—“ Aweel,” quo’ Watty;
 “ Fareweel!—faith I’ll try the seas.”
 “ O stan’ still,” quo’ Meg, and grat ay ;
 “ Ony,—ony way ye please.”

XLIX.

Maggy syne, because he prest her,
 Swore to a’ thing owre again :
 Watty lap, and danc’d, and kifs’d her ;
 Wow ! but he was won’rous fain.

L.

Down he threw his staff victorious ;
 Aft gaed bonnet, claes, and shoon ;
 Syne aneath the blankets, glorious !
 Held anither *Hinney-Moon*.



,
lood:

Watty;

;